

# An Application of African Prints to the Binding of School Notebooks

Mafouboue Larissa Michele<sup>1</sup>, Zhang Xinjiang<sup>2</sup>, Nyak Edouard<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Master in Visual Art Design, School of Fine Art, Huzhou University, Huzhou Zhejiang, China

<sup>2</sup>Professor Teacher at Huzhou University, School of Fine Art

<sup>3</sup>Master in Visual Art Design, School of Fine Art, Huzhou University, Huzhou Zhejiang, China

Received: 01 Nov 2021,

Received in revised form: 20 Dec 2021,

Accepted: 25 Dec 2021,

Available online: 31 Dec 2021

©2021 The Author(s). Published by AI Publication. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Keywords—** *bookbinding, Africa print, school notebook.*

**Abstract—** *Binding design is the most important process in the design of notebooks or school books, so good binding influences the student's choice and provides users with a social and cultural experience. Given that nowadays design is reinventing itself every day and becoming more and more creative we considered doing a study on the application of African prints in the binding of school notebooks, to carry out this study we did theoretical research and a practical essay that really edified us on the subject and demonstrate that the application of African prints to a multifaceted contribution starting from aesthetics for a new design. Based on the practice of design creation, this paper studies the uniqueness of African prints in notebook binding, analyzes the current situation of notebook binding in schools, and applies African prints in school exercise book binding, bringing unique charm to new visual taste.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's society, where science, technology and the economy are developing rapidly and continuously, the demand for new visual tastes is gradually becoming more and more diverse. In the education industry, more and more educators are paying attention to teaching culture and aesthetics. A student's first basic tool is his exercise book, which can record his school notes, and for a student, there is nothing more motivating than having a beautifully bound notebook, full of bright and joyful colors to record his school notes and ensure success at the end of the school year.

In general, many of us consider the school's notebook as just a simple tool for students, but this is wrong, and the school notebook represents a strong connection between the student's work and the teacher's work. (Buisson, 1911, s.p.)<sup>[1]</sup> A notebook is a collection of several pieces of paper that are assembled and sewn and used by students to write school notes and daily assignments given by their teachers. From this definition, we understand its usefulness in the daily lives of students.

In fact because of daily use, the school notebook must have a very practical, beautiful and comfortable cover.

Therefore, the brightly colored cover will be surely appreciated with students when choosing a school's notebook. When we talk about brightly colored and very bright patterns, we think of African prints, sometimes represented in geometric shapes, where atypical flowers appeal to anyone seeking a new visual taste. After printing the paper and selecting the cover, the design of binding is the next step to follow.

Binding is the process of assembling and fixing pages that were previously written or printed inside the cover to prevent possible degradation and allow for sustainable use. It represents the completion of a document, and the more distinctive it is, the more it attracts attention and influences the student to choose his school notebook.

Based on the practice of design and creation, my research paper focuses on the applied study of African prints in school notebook binding, and in order to conduct this research, I have some special ideas that will be unfolded in the text.

## II. THE BINDING STYLE OF THE NOTEBOOK

There are several types of notebook binding, depending on their purpose, whether professional, school, intensive, or occasional. The paper used to connect the printed paper, binding and cover reflects the final quality of the work, and the concept of quality means to deal with the actual document, visually aesthetically pleasing, comfortable to read and resistant to use. After the white paper is printed, the design of the cover is selected according to the type of binding to suit the type of final document.

### 1- Simple binding

Very convenient for documents with few page numbers, this binding is the most commonly used because it is efficient, economical, and easy to read for this type of reader to staple and attach to the cover page, making the document both sturdy and aesthetically pleasing.

This is designed for soft cover brochures, mailings, annual reports, business and technical manuals, plans and flyers, manuals, catalogs, newsletters. Here, the signatures are printed and folded, and then stacked on the collection device. The publication is then brought to the sewing head, and the staples are pushed over the spine. The collection device starts transferring the page to the saddle bar.

### 2- Perfect binding

Perfect binding is made from heavier cardboard printed patterns as the cover. It was launched in the 1920s to enable the mass production of magazines, catalogues and paperbacks. It is commonly used in paperbacks, graphic novels, literary journals, quarterly magazines, soft-cover children's books, poetry collections, autobiographies, and collections.

Its process is very simple, the folded pages are stacked in the order of the pages, and the sides of the spine are cut to get rid of the folded edges and make it rougher. Then along the way.

### 3- Wire-o binding

This binding method is called punching and binding style binding. In this technique, a hole or perforation is drilled or perforated along one side of the printed page, and a wire is moved through the hole. Very strong binding, it facilitates 360 degree opening of the manual, with comfortable handling and good reading. It is highly appreciated for its utility asset, which facilitates the updating of documents by deleting and adding worksheets without damaging them. Suitable for presentations, essays, reports, employee handbooks, training manuals, recipes, student diaries, educational programs.

Simple leaves are stacked on top of each other and the pores are evenly distributed to form a flexible spine.

Wire loops or plastic coils (spirals) are then placed in the holes to create the trunk of the document.

### 4- Sewn binding

This super-strong binding is the standard for luxury books and books. It gives the book exceptional quality, durability and extreme stability. Since rigid pages are called covers, sheets are placed together and sewn onto the cover, and at the end of binding, the back of the manual will be square or round for more elegance. Used in public library editions, collector's editions, art books.

Here, signatures will be assembled and sewn individually along the folds, the book cover is connected with a threaded book block, and finally the folds along the glue are applied to seal the spine. These threads are sewn on each page before being tied once. All in all, the binding method chosen usually depends on the size and thickness of the document, its use, and its cost, as multiple designs exist.

## III. THE UNIQUENESS OF AFRICAN PRINTS IN NOTEBOOK BINDING

Fabrics with vibrant colors and patterns that differ from each other are now an integral part of the design of new visual tastes. It has been applied to many everyday objects, without forgetting the accessories of daily life that we all have, our allies can write our elementary school notes, personal agendas or our office notes, i.e. notebooks. Regardless of its use, we have at least one in our business. Due to its graphics and very colorful patterns, African fabrics represent diversity, while expressing a great deal of cultural influence due to their original and unique designs. Its application on notebooks will give notebooks very distinctive characteristics.

### 1- Originality

The concept of originality that complements creativity is the ability to generate valuable ideas in a given environment. In everyday life, many people are particularly interested in visual language. (Edwards, Betty 1986) [2] And novelty. Therefore, in order to create an original concept of binding, we considered applying African prints in the binding of school notebooks, since the African prints part was appreciated by all those who found them. And it should be noted that the application of African prints is handmade, which brings a certain sense of modernity, creativity and trends to school notebooks, which will surely please school-age children.

### 2- Aesthetic

First of all, the aesthetics associated with beauty are one of the characteristics of African prints, and it is applied

to the binding of school notebooks, directly giving notebooks this feature. With the highly embellished production methods and carefully arranged choice of bright colors, the application of African prints in notebook binding gives our notebooks a clear aesthetic. It should be noted that during the production process, the shape and binding of the notebook are very careful to obtain the final beautiful object. In short, when the notebook itself is beautiful, it is perfect for attracting students' enthusiasm and good note-taking, so a personalized notebook with African prints and elaborate finishes will be proudly presented by those who own it.

### 3- Protection and Comfort

The comfort of African prints figures in binding a school notebook is undoubtedly the most essential, because taking notes, writing and even drawing requires a practical notebook that is easy to open and read. To meet this need for comfort, we have mastered several techniques. Having said that, we opted for a staple with a cardboard lid covered with An African print, which subsequently brought a spectacular effect and hardened the lid, making the student more comfortable and resisting many of the students' daily manipulations of the notebook.

### 4- New Design

Nowadays, the new design is characterized by the use of bright colors and any other possible image representations on the cover of the notebook, which proves that the creative field is constantly reinventing itself every day. Usually in the school supplies market we come across notebooks with various covers, so everyone can find his account. Given that design reinvents itself every day, we believe that applying African prints to notebook binding can be considered a new design because it is hardly found in the market and is little known. Printing in bright colors and inserting them into notebook binding will undoubtedly give birth to a new visual taste and awaken students to be more creative.

## IV. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF SCHOOL NOTEBOOK BINDING

The use of notebooks will be disseminated by the academy established in the sixteenth century, (Albertini, 1986)<sup>[3]</sup> (Flamarion 1997)<sup>[4]</sup>. For students in small schools, the object notebook is first mentioned in the code of Catholic school life founded (Jean-Baptiste de La Salle)<sup>[5]</sup> at the end of the seventeenth century. Every elementary school student who wants to learn to write must ask his parents to buy his paper folded into four and sewn over the entire height. To avoid wasting students efforts to master good writing, high-quality notebooks are needed. The

paper should be neither too thick not too thin, but blank, simple, stitched and glued on everything.

In the years that followed, states planned or ordered uniform compilation of school notebooks. The main purpose is to build a comprehensive learning system, innovate and practice various disciplines, and emphasize humanistic characteristics. Previously, school notebooks were only made by folding paper into two, four, or eight sheets of paper, but at present, the design of most school notebooks is fairly uniform. Model color and cover binding became increasingly practical, but very fanciful or no customization, so after the school curriculum, few students kept notebooks to consult them during the senior year. At the same time, there are also certain aesthetic and artistic traces on the finishes of some school notebooks today.

In Taiwan, for example, in 2013, a textbook reform campaign launched by a group of young people attracted worldwide attention. They reorganized and integrated the cover and design of the school notebook and combined aesthetic features to form a logical layout. At the same time, interactive design has also been added to the cover of the notebook to allow students to better understand practicality and cultivate their own sense of beauty.

Through a large number of literature and research, we found that the design of the notebook binding in other countries adopts different expressions, and at the same time, thanks to the integration of cover design, sometimes with cultural beauty, students also have a sense of beauty. For example, in some African countries, such as France and Cameroon, the design of school notebook binding includes the design and placement of different contents and education with cultural contributions, while integrating aesthetic thinking into students' daily learning life. Due to the different bright colors, educational images, sometimes multiplication tables and mathematical or scientific data are part of the layout. In fact, there is no difference between the design of school notebooks and the understanding of the concept of beauty between China and foreign countries, but foreign countries will begin to educate and cultivate beauty. Another example is in France, for them, people should not dress simply, but should dress appropriately. Aesthetic education occupies a very important position in the belief that there is no education without aesthetic education, and a new innovative form of school-based notebook can also make it easier for students to accept and understand the spread of beauty, so as to achieve an overall improvement in the level of education. (Sukhomlinski)<sup>[6]</sup>.

Therefore, we believe that it is necessary to consider redesigning the binding of school notebooks by applying

African fabrics, which can have an impact on the development of people's knowledge of the outside world, including beauty, thought, quality, in another sense.

## **V. CLASSIFICATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN PRINTS**

Depending on the different countries of the African continent, we have observed that there is a fabric with a typical print. These fabrics have different patterns, craftsmanship and weaving from each other. For decades, African women have used their imagination and creativity to produce a wide variety of African prints, and today African prints bring a new touch of beauty and originality to design. This broad pattern has multiple features, some of which we have chosen to present.

### **1- Colors**

What would African prints look like without colors? Bright colors are the other side of African print on an artistic, conceptual and technical level. Color is an integral element of African prints, as some shades are unique and cannot be found elsewhere. It's clear to us that the color we perceive affects our emotions, our behavior, and our perception of things and the idea of this fact selection tool depends on how we perceive it when we look at it. African prints consist of colors such as white, yellow, green, indigo, red, etc. Each color has a connotation, depending on the country and region to consider when choosing and using colors.

### **2- Geometric Shapes**

Geometric shapes are usually graphics that represent the shapes of different objects commonly used in mathematics, such as linear, granular, granular, square or triangular, curved or blurred circular lines, and spiral shapes. Speaking of the geometric shapes that make up African prints, some seem to come from the spirit of mathematicians, while others combine geometric shapes and poetic paintings. In addition to visual appeal, originality, and aesthetic style, its geometric patterns are sometimes attributed to deep meanings, such as curved landscape patterns and some triangular structures depicting the change of the shape of the moon according to the period. In short, the originality of his motif creators is infinite.

### **3- Symbols**

African prints are characterized by philosophical and sometimes historical symbols full of meaning, and they are characterized by symbols that can be objects or images, written texts, organic or specific brand symbols, visual

expressions conveying knowledge, feelings and values. For African engraving, symbols, sometimes shortcuts to convey deep truths in visual form, are of global importance and are found today in logos, clothing, furniture, sculptures, pottery pots and many other everyday tools.

## **VI. DESIGN AND APPLICATION OF AFRICAN PRINTS ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOL NOTEBOOKS**

As an indispensable tool in students' school life, school notebooks must follow different corresponding principles in their design. Different subjects have different needs that must be taken into account. Therefore, the design must pay attention to the method of designing the school notebook. Because school notebooks have their own unique characteristics, we need to rethink how to design the binding of school notebooks to achieve practical tools and a high level of comfort, as well as to play a role in aesthetic diffusion. When designing school notebooks, it is necessary not only to meet the aesthetic and functional requirements of school notebooks, but also to optimize and improve the intake and preservation of school works in various disciplines.

First, we need to pay special attention to the binding design according to each material and the number of pages required for the notebook.

Secondly, the finishing and forming characteristics must have a clean appearance, with the lid and edges of the plate having a sharp appearance and strict square. Not to mention the effective, carefully crafted seams or stitches with clean edges. In short, in today's artistic environment, people's concepts in various fields are progressing, which promotes aesthetics, and the requirements for art and design are at a higher level of development.

It is particularly important to address the challenges and progress made in textbook compilations, particularly with regard to school notebooks. We can see that in creating the framework of textbooks and the design of textbook notebooks taught by the field of study, it is necessary to follow its inherent essence and philosophy, so that our innovative progress is more based on the law, and mastering its guiding principles will make us more efficient in improving and creativity.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

In an educational setting, the school notebook is one of the first tools that students are exposed to in their learning, and its importance can be imagined. Therefore, in order to protect the school works well, it is necessary to



consider the binding part of these notebooks, summarize the different types and characteristics of the binding design, and observe the current binding situation of the school exercise book, we believe that it is necessary to create a new design of the school notebook, so the subject was studied. : An application of African print on the binding of notebooks in schools. Through the summary of this paper, the theoretical and practical results of this research can be summarized into the following aspects: the uniqueness of African prints in notebook binding, the analysis of the current situation of school notebook binding, and the application of African prints in school notebook binding. After studying its various aspects, it was noted that the application of African prints to school notebook binding was certainly a kind of creativity that would lead to new visual tastes, but there were still many theoretical and practical design structures worth considering, depending on the national characteristics of school notebooks.

### NOTE

- [1] BUISSON F. (1882-1887) : Dictionary of Pedagogy. Paris, Achet. (1911): New Dictionary of Sports. Paris, Achet.
- [2] Edwards, Betty. Vision, Painting, Creativity. Pierre Mardaga, Belgique, 1986.
- [3] ALBERTINI P. ( 1986 ) : Classical teaching through student manuscripts, 1640-1940. Paris, NPRI.
- [4] FLAMARION É. (1997) the Book of Etiquette of French Jewelers. 17ème. Paris, INRP, History of education, n° 74, pp. 234-242.
- [5] LA SALLE J.-B. (1994): Fact. Roman, Fellowship of Christian Schools, publisher. See Chatier A.-M. Paris, INRP, history of education, n° 81, pp. 76-85, DANCEL B. (1999): methods, in HOUSSAYE J.: Pedagogical questions. Encyclopedia of History. Paris, Achet, p. 364-380
- [6] Vasily Sukhomlinsky (author), Alan Cockerill (translator), the school of joy , EJR Language Service Pty. Ltd. September 2016

### REFERENCES

- [1] BUISSON F. ( 1882-1887 ) : Dictionary of Pedagogy. Paris, Achet. (1911): New Dictionary of Sports. Paris, Achet.
- [2] Edwards, Betty. Vision, Painting, Creativity. Pierre Mardaga, Belgique, 1986.
- [3] ALBERTINI P. ( 1986 ) : Classical teaching through student manuscripts, 1640-1940. Paris, NPRI.
- [4] FLAMARION É. (1997) the Book of Etiquette of French Jewelers. 17ème. Paris, INRP, History of education, n° 74, pp. 234-242.
- [5] LA SALLE J.-B. (1994): Fact. Roman, Fellowship of Christian Schools, publisher. See Chatier A.-M. Paris, INRP, history of education, n° 81, pp. 76-85, DANCEL B. (1999): methods, in HOUSSAYE J.: Pedagogical questions. Encyclopedia of History. Paris, Achet, p. 364-380

- [6] Vasily Sukhomlinsky (author), Alan Cockerill (translator), the school of joy , EJR Language Service Pty. Ltd. September 2016
- [7] Anne Marie Butieux, WAX, Holbec, Paris, 2017
- [8] Anne Grosphilly, Wax Figures Printed in Africa, Paris, Martinier, 2017
- [9] George Dick, Art and Aesthetics [M] Cornell University Press. Ithaca and London, 1971.
- [10] O'Dil Prin , Wax : Classics of the Five West African Nations, Tehran, 2009.
- [11] Sophie Mel; Edited a very stylish wax fabric article published on 24-06-2019
- [12] Alistair Wilson , the Book Binding Guide was published on 16/12/2020
- [13] Alain Milon and Marc Perelman, Book of Aesthetics, 2010, Nanterre
- [14] Arnheim Rudolph, Visual Thinking, Paris, Flammarion, Champs Elysées, 1997.
- [15] ZHANG Jiemin. The application of color in the binding design of children's books [J]. Research on art education, 2016.
- [16] ZHOU Yan. Children's aesthetic education is not "teaching", but "penetration"[G]. Journal of Jiamusi Vocational College, 2019, 91+93
- [17] Colin Ware, Visual Thinking Design [M], China Machine Press, 2009
- [18] Kenyan Hala. Design in Design [M]. Shandong Popular Publishing House, 2006
- [19] Donald. Norman, Emotional Design [M]. Electronic Industry Press, 2005
- [20] Barnard, Art Design and Visual Culture [M], Jiangsu Fine Arts, 2006
- [21] Seiichi Suzuki, The Beauty of Binding [M], CITIC Press, 2012 [22] Richaudeau, F, The Design and Production of Textbooks: A Practical Guide, Paris, UNESCO, 1979.
- [22] UNESCO, Textbooks and Reading Materials. Volume 3: Production and use of textbooks in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok, 1983.
- [23] Bolibaugh, J. et al., Educational Development: A Practical Problem: Guidelines for the Preparation, Production, and Distribution of Textbooks. Paris, UNESCO, 1980.
- [24] HUBERT C. and HEBRARD J: Doing Your Work, Childhood, and Culture, No. 2, 1979, pp. 47-59.